



Whistleblowing.

Policy

1. Instances of whistleblowing include, but are not limited to, allegations about any of the following:
 - 1.1 criminal offences
 - 1.2 Health & Safety risks
 - 1.3 unauthorised use of funds
 - 1.4 fraud
 - 1.5 corruption
 - 1.6 sexual, physical or verbal abuse, or bullying or intimidation of employees, volunteers, or service-users
 - 1.7 abuse of authority
 - 1.8 unethical conduct
2. Wildside will take appropriate action to protect a whistleblower who makes an allegation in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so, from any reprisals, harassment, or victimisation.
3. All allegations will initially be treated in confidence.
 - 3.1. Every effort will be made not to reveal a whistleblower's identity unless the whistleblower requests otherwise.
 - 3.2. *Note:* if the matter subsequently be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure, or legal proceedings, it may be necessary to identify the whistleblower as a witness.
 - 3.3. Whistleblowers will be encouraged – but not required – to put their name to an allegation, because anonymous allegations are usually more difficult to substantiate.
 - 3.4. At the discretion of the Directors anonymous allegations may or may not be investigated.
4. No disciplinary or other action will be taken against a whistleblower who makes an allegation in the reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so, even if the allegation is not substantiated by an investigation.
 - 4.1. Disciplinary action may be taken against a whistleblower who makes an allegation without such reasonable cause or belief (e.g. frivolously, maliciously, or for personal gain).
5. A whistleblower may be accompanied by another person of their choosing during any meetings or interviews in connection with the allegation. However, if the matter is subsequently dealt with through a different procedure, the right to be accompanied will be in accordance with the relevant procedure.
 - 5.1. Allegations of fraud will be notified to the Treasurer within 5 working days of receipt of the allegation.
 - 5.2. The Treasurer will determine whether the allegation should be investigated and, if so, the method of investigation.



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6. Allegations criminal offences will immediately be reported to the Chair of the Board of Directors, who will make a decision as to whether to inform the police.
- 7.1 *Serious* incidents will be reported to the Charity Commission, even if the incident has also been reported to the police and/or donors and/or another regulator.
7. "Serious" is defined in Charity Commission guidance.
8. Allegations of suspected harm to a vulnerable person will immediately be reported to the Chair of the Board of Directors, who will make a decision will be made as to whether to inform the police.
9. A whistleblower may be accompanied by another person of their choosing during any meetings or interviews in connection with the allegation. However, if the matter is subsequently dealt with through another procedure, the right to be accompanied will be in accordance with the relevant procedure.
10. Because whistleblowers need to be assured that the matter has been properly addressed, Wildside will – unless there be legal constraints – inform whistleblowers of the outcome of any investigation.
11. The Board of Directors takes overall responsibility for the operation of this policy and the accompanying Procedure.
- 11.1 The Board of Directors may delegate its responsibility for reporting serious incidents to someone else within the charity, such as an employee or professional advisers.